Vol. V. Numb. 30.

THE OBSERVATOR.

The French *King a* Sheep-Stealer. *The* Country-man *provides a* Muzzle *for him. Of the Duke* de Anjou's *return to* Madrid. *Remarks thereon. Of the Seige of* Oſtend, *with Remarks. Of the Seige of* Turin, *and the dubious Fate of* War. *Of the* French *King's alteration of his General Officers, with Obſervations on that Head.*

From **Wednesday** June the 26th, to **Saturday** June the 29th, 1706.

Country-m. MAſter *Obſervator*, I have been thinking of what you and Mr. *Review* have been ſaying about managing the *French* King; and, I proteſt, Maſter, I am for Mr. *Review*'s Project.

Obſ. What, againſt me?

Country-m. Againſt any Body. I am to be Govern'd by my own Reaſon and not by another Mans: And this is the Doctrine you have Preach'd, and I hope you ſtill abide by it.

Look'ye, Maſter, you are ſo Angry with the *French* King that nothing will ſerve you but his utter Deſtruction: Mr. *Review* will have him by no means deſtroy'd, but he's for feeding him with *Humble-Pye*, bringing him Low, weakening the *Conſtitution* of his *Government*. and putting it out of his Power to diſturb his Neighbours.

Now, Maſter, I like this well enough; look'ye there ſtands our Dog *Towzer*, you know he has been an old *Sheep-Stealer*, I have paid many a Pound for his *Thievery*, and he loves *Mutton* ſtill; but ſince the Cur is deſcended from a good Family, is Wakeful and Watchful at Night ſo that a Mouſe can't ſtir but he'll Bark, I have ſav'd him from the *Gallows*, and have put him on a *Muzzle*. Now the *French* King is a worſe *Sheep-Stealer* than our *Towzer*, who only *Steals* and *Worries* the *Sheep*, but he, the *French Tyrant*, *Steals* and *Devours* both the *Sheep* and the *Land* along with 'em. Now I am of Mr. *Review*'s Opinion, (tho' he don't ſpeak the thing plain to *Country Capacities*) yet he means a *Muzzle* for the *French* King to keep him from Biting.

Obſ. Thou haſt, *Roger*, a very unlucky Hand at Compariſons; and wouldſt thou uſe a *Crown'd Head* like a *Dog*?

Country-m. Maſter, I uſe theſe Homely Speeches only to render my ſelf Intelligible to the Common People, for whoſe Inſtruction you and I talk.

Obſ. But, *Roger*, you muſt be ſure to make your *Muzzle* ſtrong enough, it muſt not be a *Treaty*, a *Parchment Muzzle*; that won't hold him; and beſides the *Guarrantees* of the *Muzzle* muſt have him in a String, that he may have no Opportunity of rubbing it off, or getting any Body to looſen it for him.

Country-m. Maſter, I'll be at the Charge of it my ſelf. Our *Collar-maker* ſhall make it, he's a meer Dab at *Muzzling* all ſorts of Creatures; he made that *Muzzle* for our *Towzer*, and 'tis a ſpecial good one; and now he's a making a *Muzzle* for my Neighbour *Thomas*'s Wife to keep her from *Scolding*; and, *Joan*, I'll tell thee what, if ever I hear thee again have any *Evil Communication* with the Queens Enemies, that is, with our *Tacking Prieſthood*, I will have a *Muzzle* made for thee, and will tye thee up to *better Manners*.

Maſter, you don't underſtand the Doctrine of the *Muzzle*; 'tis much us'd both in *War* and *Civil-Government*: When they can't afford time to deſtroy a thing, or they think it impracticable to be done, then they Murder *it*, that is, they keep *it* from doing of Miſchief. Thus they Muzzle the *Cannon*, when they Nail 'em up: This keeps 'em from Roaring and Spitting *Iron Dumplins*. An *Information* in the *Crown-Office* is a Muzzle for a *Saucy Scribbler*; and if that won't do he muſt have his *Collar* put on, that is a *Pillory*; and this is Nailing up his *Pen*: The *Emperor* Muzzled the *Jeſuit* from Curſing *Heretical Princes*, and made him for once ſpeak the Truth of the Allies. Few People underſtand the Advantage of the Muzzle, it deſtroys the *Evil Effects*, and yet preſerves the *Species*.

Obſ. Well then, let the *French* King be *Muzzled* if the *Confederates* pleaſe: But I am pritty well aſſured they'll Tye him Up faſt enough. A little News. *Roger*, if thou haſt got any.

Country-m. Yes, Maſter, I have got a ſmall Cargo, but never a Fighting Story. Our *Right Treacherous* and *ill-Beloved*, the Duke *D' Anjou* is return'd to *Madrid*: Some ſay his coming thither was becauſe the *Portugueze* were not there before him. The *Spaniſh* Rabble receiv'd him with abundance of Acclamations, Huzza'd like ſo many Draggons, and would ha' thrown their Hats and Caps into the Air, had they had any to throw; but ſome wiſe People of my Acquaintance at *London*, ſay, That in a ſhort time, the very People that Shouted him *In*, will Hoot him *Out* again. *Amen.*

He had a long Conference with the *Grandees*; and all the *French* that were in the *City* and at *Court*, were ordered to Depart, except Maſter *Amelot*, the *French* Ambaſſador, ſo that now he is trying to quiet the Minds of the Tumultuous *Spaniards* by removing their Oppreſſion out of their Sight.

Obſ. This is a ſure ſign of a ſpeedy *Abdication*; 'twas ſo in *England*. Thoſe who miſled the late King *James*, upon the Diſembarquement of the Prince of *Orange*, adviſed him to reſtore the *Raviſh'd Charters*, *Magdalen-Colledge*, and the diſplaced *Magiſtrates*, to baniſh the *Jeſuits* and the *Imps* of *Rome* from his Preſence, but all this would not do, that Day of *State* was too far ſpent, it prov'd an *Abdication*, follow'd with a *Revolution*. I told you long ago it would ſo happen in *Spain*; and, indeed, I expected it before this time, and how it came to fail I have nothing to ſay. What News from *Oſtend*?

Country-m. The *Confederates* have actually Beſieged the Town, both by Sea and Land; and the Foreign Prints, as well as our own, ſay That we ſhall be Maſters of it in fourteen Days.

Obſ.

Obſ. Did not I tell you, when Other People were Taking that Town over a Pipe of *Tobacco*, that it would coſt us dear? But we muſt have it at any rate. I ſhall Rejoyce if I hear it is Taken in twenty Days. I know the Town, *Roger*, and can aſſure thee 'tis one of the Strongeſt Garriſons that ever I ſaw; but I am in hopes of one thing, that is of their want of Proviſions; for the *Victory* at *Ramelly* was ſo ſudden and unexpected, they Dream'd ſo little of a Seige, that in Humane probability they put in no ſufficient *Stores*; and the *Proviſions* of *War* ſignifies little without the *Proviſions* for the *Belly*. For, as *Sancho Pancha* ſays, *'Tis the Guts that Support the Heart, and not the Heart the Guts.* If that Town be well provided, and the Garriſon will make a Vigorous Defence, it will not be Reduc'd ſo ſoon as ſome People imagine.

Country-m. Maſter, I have ſome ill News to tell you. The Poor Duke of *Savoy* is in a fair way of loſing his Country. *Turin* is Beſiged: The Princeſſes, his Children are Removed rom the Town by the Leave of the *French* Generals, who have ſent their Maſter word that they don't queſtion to get Poſſeſſion of that Town in a Months time.

Obſ. Many Things, many Accidents may happen in a Months time; and the Fate of *War* is ſo very Tickliſh, that no certain Concluſion can be taken from its preſent Poſture. He that means to Paint *Bellona*, muſt have a very quick Eye, and muſt form an *Idea* of Her *Features*, Her *Air* and *Complection* at once: For if he proceeds Gradually to Mark out Her *Features*, and then to Paint Her *Complection*, he'll find it alter ſo in the Action, that he muſt find an Art to make his Paint alter with it.

The Fate of *War* is Dubious, ſo uncertain, that when Generals are juſt going to cry *Victory*, an Adverſe Chance ſteps in and gives the *Succeſs* on the other ſide. The *French* at the Battail of *Ramelly*, began with Inſults, as if they had been flush'd with *Victory*, and *Fate* had aſſur'd 'em of *Succeſs*. They did not think of Defeated *Legions*, Scatter'd *Troops*, a vaſt *Carnage* of *Bavarian* and *French* Mortals on the Ground, *Strong-holds* Capitulating, Declaring for King *Charles*, and Surrendring to the Victorious Army; and all this they ſaw in the Series of a few hours.

Who could have thought the Succeſs of thoſe two great Generals, Prince *Eugene*, and the Earl of *Peterborough*, that one ſhould keep Footing in *Italy*, with ſo ſmall an Army, ſo much out Number'd, and that the Other, with a poor handful of Men ſhould over-run ſuch large Territories, and give us a Proſpect of reducing the largeſt Kingdom, and moſt extended of any in the Univerſe.

This is the handy Work of *Providence* which gives Succeſs, contrary to Humane Expectation, that Mankind may look farther than Inſtruments, and not put their Truſt in the Numbers of *Men*, or Wiſdom of *Generals*, but in the *Lord of Hoſts*, who gives *Victory*, and appears in the Heat of Battail, turning it as he pleaſes, according to the Determination of His *Infinite Wiſdom*.

Don't dread the Conſecuences of the Seige of *Turin*, 'tis impoſſible to know the Event, as black Clouds have gathered over the Head of the *Confederacy*, which have afterwards been Diſpell'd; and this is our Comfort that if any Failure happen in that Quarter, it can't be charg'd to the *Engliſh* and *Dutch* Account.

Country-m. The *French* King, ſince the Defeat at *Ramelly*, has made an alteration in his *Generals*, the Duke of *Orleans* is to be *General* of the Army in *Lombardy*, and Monſieur *de Villars* to ſerve under him. The Duke of *Vandoſme* comes into *Flanders*, and Monſieur *Marſin* is to ſucceed Monſieur *Villars*. *This alteration*, ſays the *Paris Gazette*, A la main, *makes us hope our Affairs will be Re-Eſtabliſh'd, and that the Enemy will be forced to alter their Deſigns.*

Obſ. It may be not. For I don't ſee any Cauſe to alter our *Deſigns* upon the *French* Kings alteration of his *Generals*. This alteration proceeds from a *Court Intereſt*; few *Courts* are without *Factions* and *Parties*. *Vandoſme* has now got what he has a long time deſired, that is, to Command againſt the Duke of *Marlborough*. His Creatures, the *Court Par-Wigs*, have *Conjur'd*, *Foreboded*, *Foretold*, as by a *Prophetick Spirit*, that *Vandoſme* ſhall Conquer our Duke, and Retrieve the *French Power* in *Flanders* and *Germany*. Now that Point may in time be decided, and we ſhall ſee whether *Vandoſme* be a better *Conjurer* or *Soldier*.

Indeed our Duke has a dreadful Enemy to Engage, an Enemy that, how much ſo ever he be beaten, will cry *Victoria* and Sing *Te Deum*. What a Power of *Vandoſme's* Victories have we been cloy'd with from *Italy*, where he was always worſted, and yet pretended a *Conqueſt*? But theſe Victories won't paſs in *Flanders*; the Theatre of *War* is too near for the Actors to Impoſe on the *Credulity* of the People.

What the *French* may think of this alteration, as to the mending of their Affairs I can't tell; but to me it ſeems likely to be of ill Conſequence. The Duke of *Bavaria* I find is quite laid aſide, out of all Command; a good Reward for his *Treachery*; Monſieur *Villeroy* has met with the ſame Fate, and Monſieur *de Villars* with a little better, who, from a Chief Commander, is to ſerve under the D. of *Orleans*: This will be the occaſion of *Heart-burning*, *Envy* and *Malice* among the *General Officers*; they'll witch one againſt another, and pray for one anothers Misfortunes.

Now, certainly, *France* has been out in its *Politicks* in not appointing theſe Lucky Skilful Generals before; and I am ſure 'tis no Policy, at this time, to bring the Duke *de Vandoſme* into *Flanders*, where he knows not one Foot of the Ground, and to diſplace one that is ſo well acquainted, and has Commanded ſo long in that Country.

I have other Inſtances than this to ſhow that the *Councils* of *France* are become Fooliſhneſs, and that the *Tyrant* is Infatuated. Theſe Turns and Changes in his Army are but Judications of his Deſtruction, like the uneaſineſs of a Sick-Man on his Bed. But with his Generals he ſhould ha' chang'd his Soldiers; for while the Allies have better *Infantry* and *Cavalry*, 'tis no matter who Commands the *French* Kings Army.

Country-m. Maſter, here's a good Health to Monſieur *Vandoſme*: May he come ſafe into *Flanders* to Learn a *Hogſteet* and *Ramelly* Jigg. Let'n Fight our Duke as ſoon as he dares.

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